

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
FULL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
July 26, 2006, 4:30 p.m. Council Chambers

PRESENT

Ian Kohen
Greg Lewis
Akua Ofori-Boateng
Gil Palmer
John Roberts
Marie Schroeder
John Stroh
Jason Staley

ABSENT

Tony McClendon
Jay Myers
Wes Roy

***** Meeting Called to Order *****

STAFF PRESENT:

Director Arlette Tinsley, Deputy Director Lorraine Smith and Secretary Lula Young.

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

Secretary Roberts called roll. **Commissioner Staley moved to accept the June Minutes as submitted, Commissioner Lewis seconded. Motion carried.**

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Commissioner Lewis reported the beginning balance, as of June 23 2006, as \$4,911.74. One expenditure of \$96.00 to the Columbus Area Arts Council. Annual dinner ticket deposits totaled \$300.00, leaving an account balance of \$5,115.74 as of July 21, 2006.

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT:

Chairperson Palmer announced the formation of the Economic Diversity Council, convened by Frank Griffin, Tom Harmon of Harmon Construction and Hubert Goodman. The intent of the council is to research where the African American community fits into the economic development plan of the city and a long-term goal to mobilize the African-American community based upon the ten 'covenants' outlined by Tavis Smiley in his book, A Covenant with Black America.

Chairperson Palmer advised that the council is developing subcommittees to research education, economic development and justice in the Columbus community. The council is available to all and the chairperson encouraged all to participate. Discussion ensued.

Chairperson Palmer announced a public forum on August 16, 2006 at Yes Cinema, sponsored by the Columbus Area Economic Growth Council where there will be discussion of the impact

of Honda on the local economy. There will be two additional forums addressing workforce, social and governmental impact.

DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Director Tinsley announced the passing of Ellen Davis Laws, widow of William R. Laws. Commissioners discussed attending the memorial service, as Mrs. Laws was instrumental in the development of the Human Rights Commission. Prior to her passing, the 2006 recipient of the William R. Laws Human Rights Award, Gene Maresca, had the opportunity to meet Mrs. Laws.

A review of the 2006 Annual Dinner wrap-up was provided by Director Tinsley. The Commission sustained a loss in revenue for the first time in ten years. Without the support of the Mayor, the loss would have been \$1,400.00. Negotiations and conversations are underway for the 2007 dinner facility and labor costs.

Director Tinsley informed the Commissioners that August 3, 2006 at 1:15 p.m., is the date and time for the 2007 Budget hearings in front of City Council to receive approval of the budget approved by commissioners. Chairperson Palmer volunteered to attend in support of the budget.

Director Tinsley reported on the upcoming Community Outreach Program sponsored by Faith, Hope & Love, Church of God in Christ on August 12, 2006, and shared their request to have a representative from the commission participate. Commissioners requested an opportunity to review calendars prior to volunteering for the event.

Director Tinsley requested Commissioners review a request for billboard funding assistance from Karen Garrity, Director of Elementary Education, for the 2006 BCSC Anti-Bullying program kick-off. Commissioner discussion ensued. **Commissioner Lewis moved to support the BCSC Anti-Bullying Billboard in the amount of \$100.00. Commissioners Roberts seconded. Motion carried unanimously.**

OPEN FORUM/CURRENT EVENTS & COMMUNITY CONCERNS:

Commissioner Roberts suggested that as many Commissioners as possible attend the Ellen Laws memorial service on Saturday, July 29, in recognition of her contributions to the Human Rights Commission. Several Commissioners agreed to attend the service with Commissioner Roberts.

Commission meeting guests in attendance were Edward Fox, GS/A Columbus and Indiana Black Pride, Lori Stone-Sirtosky and Brian Sirtosky with the Indiana Transgendered Rights Advocacy Alliance (INTRAA) and Bruce Parker, INTRAA Advocacy Coordinator.

Mr. Fox advised he was attending to observe and voice his desire for the modification of the Human Rights Ordinance to include Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity. Mr. Fox requested that Commissioners extend the deadline for the sub-committee report to allow more time to collect data reports from students returning to the local high schools and colleges.

Attending guests offered their support and with Commissioners, continued discussion on the current research of the Ad Hoc committee.

OTHER BUSINESS: Training – Sexual Orientation and the Law:

Director Tinsley provided training with a PowerPoint presentation on Sexual Orientation and the Law.

Commissioner Staley moved to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Kohen seconded. Meeting adjourned.